

## Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05  
H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02  
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/122 W

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R 151500Z MAY 78  
FM USINT HAVANA  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1871  
INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA  
AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO  
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

C O N F I D E N T I A L HAVANA 1250

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PDEV, MILI, ET, SO, CU, AO  
SUBJECT: MINREX VICE-MINISTER COMMENTS ON AFRICA AND OTHER TOPICS  
IN U.S.-CUBAN RELATIONS

1. BEGIN SUMMARY. CUBAN FIRST VICE-MINISTER OF FOREIGN RELATIONS SAYS  
THERE IS NO EARLY PROSPECT OF CUBAN MILITARY WITHDRAWALS FROM ETHIOPIA

OR ANGOLA DUE TO CONTINUING EXTERNAL THREATS TO THOSE COUNTRIES. HE  
REAFFIRMS CUBAN SUPPORT FOR POLITICAL SETTLEMENT IN ERITREA AND  
EXPRESSES ABSOLUTE CUBAN SUPPORT FOR SWAPO AND POPULAR FRONT IN THE  
SOUTH. CONVERSATION ALSO COVERED TREATY OF TLATELOLCO AND PENDING  
CONSULAR PROBLEMS. END SUMMARY.

2. I REQUESTED A MEETING WITH FIRST VICE-MINISTER OF FOREIGN RELATIONS

RENE ANILLO TO REVIEW SEVERAL PENDING PROBLEMS PRIOR TO MY DEPARTURE  
ON MAY 20 FOR HOME LEAVE AND CONSULATIONS. INTERVIEW WAS GRANTED  
ON MAY 12. SUBJECTS COVERED INCLUDED CUBAN PRESENCE IN AFRICA,  
REPORTED IN THIS MESSAGE, AS WELL AS CONTINUING DELAYS IN OUR CONSULAR

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ACCESS TO AMERICAN PRISONERS, REPATRIATION OF DUAL NATIONALS AND THEIR  
FAMILIES, AND THE CUBAN POSITION ON THE TREATY OF TLATELOLCO. THESE  
OTHER TOPICS WILL BE COVERED IN SEPTELS.

3. I BEGAN BY ASKING IF THERE WERE ANYTHING NEW IN THE CUBAN PERCEPT-  
ION OF THE SITUATION IN AFRICA, WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO ETHIOPIA,

ANGOLA, ZIMBABWE AND NAMIBIA WHICH THE VICE-MINISTER COULD TELL ME PRIOR TO MY DEPARTURE FOR THE U.S. ANILLO, WHO IS THE EMBODIMENT OF TACITURNITY AT BEST, FIRST RESPONDED BY REFERRING ME TO FIDEL CASTRO'S SPEECH AND THE COMMUNIQUE WHICH FOLLOWED PRESIDENT MENGISTU'S

RECENT VISIT TO CUBA, AND ALSO TO VICE-PRESIDENT ALMEIDA'S SPEECH AT THE RECENT UN SPECIAL SESSION ON NAMIBIA. ON FURTHER PROBING, HE MADE THE FOLLOWING ADDITIONAL POINTS:

A. CUBAN TROOPS WILL REMAIN IN ETHIOPIA BECAUSE SOMALIA HAS NOT RENOUNCED ITS AGGRESSIVE DESIGNS AND IN FACT CONTINUES TO TALK ABOUT WAR IN OGADEN. PARADOXICALLY, ANILLO STATED THAT THE SOMALI ARMY WHICH INVADDED THE OGADEN HAD BEEN DESTROYED, AND THAT THERE IS CURRENTLY VERY LITTLE MILITARY ACTION IN THAT REGION. WITH RESPECT TO ERITREA, CUBA SEES THIS AS AN INTERNAL PROBLEM FOR ETHIOPIA, ALTHOUGH ANILLO SUGGESTED THAT THE RECENT INCREASE OF SECESSIONIST ACTIVITY IS DUE IN LARGE PART TO OUTSIDE HELP AND ENCOURAGEMENT TAKING ADVANTAGE OF THE UNSETTLED ETHIOPIAN REVOLUTION. FUZZILY AND WITH NOTABLY LITTLE CONVICTION, HE REPEATED THE NOW STANDARD LINE THAT CUBA FAVORS A PEACEFUL POLITICAL SETTLEMENT IN ERITREA AND DOES NOT PLAN TO PARTICIPATE IN MILITARY ACTION THERE. HE SAID WITH NO SUGGESTION OF OPTIMISM THAT THE PROSPECTS FOR PEACE DEPEND UPON ALL THE CONTENDING PARTIES. IN RESPONSE TO MY SPECIFIC QUESTION HE ADDED THAT CUBA IS TRYING TO ADVANCE THE CAUSE OF PEACE AMONG THOSE PARTIES BUT HE OFFERED NO DETAILS.

B. CUBAN TROOPS WILL ALSO REMAIN IN ANGOLA IN VIEW OF THE CONTIN-  
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UING THREAT FROM ZAIRE AND SOUTH AFRICA. ANILLO HAD VERY LITTLE

HOPE FOR THE CURRENT DIPLOMATIC EFFORTS TO ALLAY EITHER OF THOSE THREATS. HE OF COURSE CASTIGATED SOUTH AFRICA FOR ITS RECENT INVASION OF ANGOLA, AND LISTENED WITHOUT COMMENT TO MY ASSURANCES THAT THE WESTERN FIVE WOULD CONTINUE THEIR EFFORTS TO ACHIEVE A PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT IN NAMIBIA. HE DID SAY THAT IT WAS HIS PERSONAL UNDERSTAND-

ING THAT SWAPO HAS NOT DEFINITELY BROKEN OFF CONVERSATIONS WITH THE FIVE, BUT HE WOULD NOT ADMIT THAT CUBA HAS ANY SPECIFIC INFORMATION ON SWAPO'S POSITION IN THIS REGARD. HE REPEATED THE LINE FREQUENTLY VOICED BY CUBAN OFFICIALS HERE THAT WALVIS BAY IS THE MOST CRITICAL PROBLEM IN THE NEGOTIATIONS.

C. THE PRINCIPAL ELEMENT IN CUBA'S POLICY TOWARD BOTH NAMIBIA AND ZIMBABWE IS ABSOLUTE SUPPORT FOR SWAPO AND THE POPULAR FRONT RESPECTIVELY. ANILLO CONDEMNED THE INTERNAL SETTLEMENT IN RHODESIA AND WAS NOT HOPEFUL OF A PEACEFUL OUTCOME. I STRESSED THAT THE U.S. AND U.K. ARE CONTINUING THEIR EFFORTS TO BRING ALL THE PARTIES TOGETHER. ANILLO WOULD NOT BE DRAWN OUT FURTHER ON POSSIBLE CUBAN REACTION IF CURRENT PEACEMAKING EFFORTS IN RHODESIA AND NAMIBIA FAIL.

4. COMMENT: WITH EXCEPTION OF LIMITED PROGRESS ON CONSULAR PROBLEMS

(SEPTTEL), THIS CONVERSATION WAS NOT ENCOURAGING WITH RESPECT TO CUBAN MOVEMENT ON MATTERS OF CONCERN TO US. IT WAS ONCE AGAIN CLEAR THAT CUBA IS NOT PREPARED AT PRESENT TO MAKE CONCESSIONS IN ITS FOREIGN POLICIES, ESPECIALLY IN AFRICA, TO ACCOMMODATE THE U.S. OR ADVANCE THE NORMALIZATION PROCESS. IF IT SHOWS RESTRAINT IN ERITREA OR IN SOUTHERN AFRICA, THIS WILL BE A FUNCTION OF CUBA'S RELATIONS WITH OTHER COUNTRIES INVOLVED IN THOSE REGIONS AND MORE GENERALLY WITH THE NAM RATHER THAN WITH THE UNITED STATES. NEVERTHELESS, VICE-MINISTER ANILLO AGREED WITH MY OBSERVATION AT THE CONCLUSION

OF THE MEETING THAT OUR TWO COUNTRIES SHOULD CONTINUE A DIALOGUE ON THESE MATTERS.

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